

Forestry Incentives Program (FIP)

Introduction

The 1996 Farm Bill extended the Forestry Incentives Program (FIP), originally authorized in 1978, through the year 2002, to share up to 65 percent of the costs of tree planting, timber stand improvements, and related practices on nonindustrial private forest lands. FIP's forest maintenance and reforestation provide numerous natural resource benefits, such as reduced wind and soil erosion and enhanced water quality and wildlife habitat, and help to assure a reliable future supply of timber. Improving timber stands, which help to sequester greenhouse gases, also contributes to the President's Climate Change initiative. FIP is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Forest Service (FS). Federal cost-share money is available with a limit of \$10,000 per person per year and the stipulation that no more than 65 percent of the cost may be paid.

FIP-Preparing To Meet the Demand

FIP helps to assure the Nation's ability to meet future demand for sawtimber, pulpwood, and quality hardwoods by planting more trees and placing more forest land under good forest management. FIP's cost-sharing for these measures helps eligible private landowners, whose small parcels represent the majority of the Nation's forest lands.

California Program Availability

FIP is available in designated counties in California, based on a Forest Service survey of total eligible private timber acreage that is potentially suitable for production of timber products.

Eligibility

To be eligible for cost-share assistance under FIP, a landowner must:

- Own at least 10 but no more than 1,000 acres of eligible forest land. In the public interest, the NRCS State Conservationist, with concurrence with the State Forester, can grant an exception for larger acreages less than 5,000 acres.
- Be a private landowner of a nonindustrial forest. Individuals, groups, associations, or corporations whose stocks are not publicly traded may be eligible for FIP provided they are not primarily engaged in the business of manufacturing forest products or providing public utility services;
- Have land that is suitable for conversion from nonforest land into forest land (afforestation); for reforestation; or for improved forest management; and
- Have land that is capable of producing marketable timber crops that meets minimum productivity standards established for FIP. California has two productivity standards: Zone II includes the Modoc Plateau, east side of the Sierra Nevada, south of the Transverse Range, and central coast south of the Carmel Valley. In Zone II productivity must exceed 50 cubic feet per acre per year. In the remainder of the state, productivity must be site-class three or better (approximately 70 cubic feet per acre per year productivity).

Counties Eligible for FIP

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Alpine | Madera | San Mateo |
| Amador | Marin | Santa Barbara |
| Butte | Mariposa | Santa Clara |
| Calaveras | Mendocino | Santa Cruz |
| Colusa | Modoc | Shasta |
| Del Norte | Mono | Sierra |
| El Dorado | Monterey | Siskiyou |
| Fresno | Napa | Solano |
| Glenn | Nevada | Sonoma |
| Humboldt | Placer | Tehama |
| Inyo | Plumas | Trinity |
| Kern | Riverside | Tulare |
| Kings | San Benito | Tuolumne |
| Lake | San Bernardino | Ventura |
| Lassen | San Diego | Yuba |
| Los Angeles | San Luis Obispo | |

Available Practices Under FIP

Planting Trees

This includes site preparation, purchasing the trees, planting them and weed control measures within 36 months of planting.

Improving a stand of forest trees

This includes thinning, removal of competing vegetation, pruning, and disposal of the slash created by applying the practices.

Site preparation for natural regeneration

The California Department of Forestry (CDF) provides technical advice in developing a forest management plan, including how the work is to be successfully accomplished, and helps to find approved vendors, if needed, for completing the FIP work. Also, CDF must certify that the project has been completed satisfactorily before cost-share payments can be made.

For More Information

More information is available from NRCS, Forest Service, Farm Service Agency, the Cooperative Extension Service, CDF, or your local resource conservation district. Your local USDA Service Center is listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture. Information is also available on California NRCS's World-Wide-Web site at <www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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